



Congressman
BENNIE THOMPSON
 REPRESENTING THE SECOND DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI



The Thompson Report

**Homeland Security Requires
Hometown Security**

TKO Bush's "Social Security" Plan

Leave Community Development Block Grants Alone

**Lunch with the
Greenville Rotary Club**

MISSISSIPPI

AGRICULTURE
BLUES
HISTORY



Homeland Security Requires Hometown Security

On March 21-22, 2005, my colleagues on the Committee for Homeland Security joined me to hold a field hearing entitled *"Protecting Our Commerce: Enhancing Port and Waterway Security"* in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

The purpose of the field hearing was to allow Members of Congress examine first-hand the security of U.S. ports and inland waterways in the region. I thought it was appropriate to hold such a hearing in our backyard. After all, we are concerned about protecting our ports just as much as anyone. I felt that Vicksburg was

a prime location to feature our State and the ports as one of our most critical resources.

The members of Congress who were present included Chairman Christopher Cox (R-CA); Congressman Bob Etheridge (D-NC); Congressman Bobby Jindal (R-LA); Congressman John Linder (R-GA); and Congressman Kendrick Meek (D-FL). On Monday, March 21, 2005, the members took a tour of the Port of Vicksburg.

The tour was hosted by the Corps of Engineers and the Warren

"... we must continue to review and critique the funding and resources that have been made available to the Coast Guard."

(Continued on page 3)

TKO Bush's "Social Security" Plan

Since President Bush has devised a scheme that continues to destroy our economy and handicap minorities even more, Congressional hearing have been held all across the United States to discuss his plan to privatize Social Security (SS). SS affects millions of Ameri-

cans who have paid into this system set-up to give back. These people have already invested their money in a system that has never missed a payment in all the 70 years it has existed. We are only giving them back what they put in—it is not charity. All across my district I

have been bringing the facts to my constituents during town hall meetings to keep them informed of what directly affects them. I am a product of Social Security benefits and those benefits will not be secure if we allow it to be privatized. My father died when I was 10 years old

and those benefits were paid to my mother and assisted her with helping to raise me when we lost the income of my father—so I how vital it is to secure SS and not gamble with it.

On February 28, 2005

(Continued on page 2)

Serving: Attala, Bolivar, Carroll, Claiborne, Coahoma, Copiah, Hinds, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Jefferson, Leake, Leflore, Madison, Montgomery, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington, Yazoo

Leave Community Development Grants Alone

"The President's FY 06' budget does not come close to addressing our nation's deficit, and the mere thought of cutting out Community Development Block Grants to balance the budget is ignorant."

It is easy for the Bush Administration to play on the fears of our senior, disabled, and impoverished communities, especially when the fear stems from the administration's policies. Many of us have been terrorized by talks of Medicare reform, Social Security privatization, and now the threat of losing community grants. The President's FY 06' budget does not come close to addressing our nation's deficit, and the mere thought of cutting out Community Development Block Grants to balance the budget is ignorant.

Though the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund seems to be an easy target since it is

among the most flexible federal funds available, localities should not give up on democracy just yet. In fact, the impact of losing such a community safety net is

enough to make any federal lawmaker reconsider the proposed cuts.

From the local perspective, the CDBG Program is one of the few programs in the Federal government that directs funding to benefit low-and-moderate

income communities. More than 70% of the CDBG funds are spent to benefit the families that live in those communities.

Many communities use CDBG fund to build or improve streets, sidewalks, sewer, and water systems. These community grants fund community services such as childcare programs, emergency shelter programs, programs for victims of domestic violence and employment training programs, construction of community centers, and modifications of public spaces to make them

accessible to the handicapped or rehabilitation of existing public facilities.

CDBG funds put communities to work. They help keep local taxes in check, charges for community services manageable, and frees up local dollars which would have been spent otherwise. The bottom line is that CDBG's have never been viewed as a spending problem and should not be treated as one now. As Congress moves forward, I will continue to fight against budget cuts that adversely affect our communities and citizens.

For more information, please contact Karis Gutter in my Washington, DC office at 202-225-



Visit Congressman Thompson on the Web at www.house.gov/thompson.

TKO Bush's "Social Security" Plan



Congressman Thompson at the Aaron Henry Center speaking on Social Security

care (NCPSSM) were among those unveiling the truth to the Presidents plan to drain security out of Social Security at the expense of poor people.

"We are only giving them back what they put in—it is not charity."

ple.

Both speakers spoke in depth on the realities and myths about SS. Some of the information shared in a report from the NCPSSM spoke on how privatization will place all the risk of having a secure retirement on the people who will need that money in order to live. Between 1999 and

2002, market invested 401(k) accounts of people over 60 lost 25 percent of their value. And for those currently retired or nearing retirement age privatization will allow an enormous amount of money to be taken out of the SS trust fund making it highly possible to be unable to pay full SS benefits by 2015. Do you really want a stranger gambling with your money in the unstablized stock market or any other scheme?

For more information, please contact Geri Adams in my Mound Bayou office at 662-741-9003.

at the Aaron Henry Health Center in Clarksdale, Mississippi, Robert Harvey, Administrative Law Judge and expert from AARP; and Priscilla Chatman, of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medi-

Homeland Security Requires Hometown Security

County Port Commission. The tour concluded with a ride on a Corps of Engineers' vessel.

On Tuesday, March 22, 2005, the field hearing was held at the Vicksburg Convention Center in which a panel of local experts presented their perspectives on protecting our ports and commerce from terrorist attacks. What we took from that hearing was invaluable. We heard first hand accounts from the experts that ports do not have adequate funding, equipment and support necessary to protect us from terrorist attacks.

The recurring theme was clear.



March 21, 2005 Port of Vicksburg Committee members: Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) Ranking Member, Chairman Christopher Cox, Bob Etheridge (D-NC), and Kendrick Meek (D-FL)

Although we have made strides in protecting our ports since 9/11, we must continue to review and critique the funding and resources that have been made available to the Coast Guard and Port Commissions. It is vital that concerned citizens and officials keep their Members of Congress informed on problems that exist in protecting the homeland. Homeland security begins with hometown security and that begins with concerned citizens like each and everyone of you.

For more information, please call Zahra Buck in my Washington, DC office at 202-225-5876.

Lunch with the Greenville Rotary Club

All eyes were glued as reports were given about Homeland Security, the Presidents' plan for Social Security, and Budget Cuts. The Presidents' budget does not mention the money

it will take to adequately fund the War in Iraq.

Debates have been going on about Social Security. Proposed solutions include, (1) currently anyone who makes over \$90 thousand is only taxed up to \$90 thousand. Some Democrats have proposed that they be taxed on all they make, which will help secure the future of SS; (2) raise the retirement age to 72 years of age. One of my constituents over in Moorhead asked me, why we "Congress" can not give the okay to print more money to get us out of debt? Well, like I

"I wish it was that simple but there is a thing called being responsible."

told her, I wish it was that simple but there is a thing called being "responsible." Printing money every time a problem arises would not portray us leaders as good role models.

We, the Members of Congress face this type and other dilemma's daily when it comes to balancing the budget and funding programs. Earlier this week, I along with some of my colleagues attended a homeland security hearing in Vicksburg to hear from first responders and others. As ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I will do my best to ensure they have the tools to do the job.

One more thing, issues of term limits have plagued Congress for the last several years. If we

had term limits, then Thad Cochran, Trent Lott, Chip Pickering, Roger Wicker and me as well would not still be your representative in DC and Seniority

would not be significant.

Mississippians voted Thad Cochran back in, he now Chairs the Appropriations Committee—which means a Mississippi Representative sits at the head of the money table as a result of Seniority! This same seniority has placed me a next in line to chair Homeland Security. This would not be possible if we had term limits. So, thank you—to the citizens of Mississippi for having faith in the Mississippi delegation to keep send-

ing us back to Washington. Every time you send me back, I will do all I can to make sure you have the best representation and the best lines of com-



Greenville Rotary Club March 24, 2005

munication between Mississippi and Washington. I look forward to working with you on all projects that will benefit citizens of the Second Congressional District.

For more information, please contact Juliet Thomas in my Greenville office at 662-335-9003.

United States Representative Bennie G. Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
Email: ThompsonMS2nd@mail.house.gov



~ANNOUNCEMENTS~

- ◆ Congressman Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Committee responds to President Bush's State of the Union address. To read his response and to find out the latest on Homeland Security please visit The United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security—Democratic Office at <http://www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/>.
- ◆ Having the largest district in Mississippi requires more effort from me to make sure I am accessible to my constituents. Therefore I would like to announce that my new office is now open and staffed by Ms. Brenda Funches and is located at:
3607 Medgar Evers Blvd
Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Phone: 601-982-8582
Fax: 601-982-5337

★ **Washington, D.C.**
2432 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-5876
(202) 225-5898 (Fax)

★ **Bolton**
107 West Madison Street
Bolton, Mississippi 39041
(601) 866-9003
(601) 866-9036 (Fax)
(800) 355-9003 (In State)

★ **Greenville**
910 Courthouse Lane
Greenville, Mississippi 38701
(662) 335-9003
(662) 334-1304 (Fax)

★ **Greenwood**
509 Highway 82 West
Greenwood, Mississippi 38930
(662) 455-9003
(662) 453-0118 (Fax)

★ **Marks**
Quitman County Court House
335 Peach Street
Marks, Mississippi 38646
(662) 326-9003

★ **Mound Bayou**
Mound Bayou City Hall
Room 134
106 West Green Street
Mound Bayou, Mississippi 38762
(662) 741-9003
(662) 741-9002 (Fax)

★ **Jackson**
3607 Medgar Evers Blvd
Jackson, Mississippi 39213
(601) 982-8582
(601) 982-5337 (Fax)